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## SANTA ROSA DIVISION

As recorded in Pioneer Nevada, the first white man in the Paradise Valley region was Peter Skene Ogden. The following account is recorded there:

They trapped down the Quinn River, shifted over to the Little Humboldt near Paradise, and took fifty beavers where the stream was lined with Indian wickiups of tules, willow, and mud.

They soon worked down to the Humboldt, which Ogden believed to be a branch of the Owyhee. Here they found a pitiful band of Indians dressed in rabbit skins and living on seeds and wild flour. Ogden's trappers raced with the chilly arrival of winter and soon they took over a thousand skins! The fires of the trapper camp burned bright at night as they celebrated with a great feast of ducks and geese and the squaws worked on each pile of pelts.

Ogden moved down the stream and talked about taking 3,000 pelts, but winter came faster with a heavy storm. Their Iroquois scout brought a young trapper into camp, soaked with rain and delirious with pneumonia. They piled blankets on him in his wickiup, but he became worse and the cold rain turned to snow. The horses were starving and the food ran very low. Heavy ice formed on the river. The dying trapper, young Joseph Paul, was a favorite with Ogden and he refused to leave him until the entire party was on the verge of starvation.

At last Ogden left two men with Paul, and moved his main party up the Humboldt through the storm. After eating most of the horses, and nearly freezing and starving, they finally arrived back at their winter base in Salt Lake. The next spring, his men showed him where Paul lay buried below the present site of Mill City, and Ogden named the stream Paul's River, which was in some usage until Fremont later named it Humboldt. Ogden continued on down the River exploring into the Snake and trapped the entire course. Despite his name of Paul's River, most trappers persisted in calling it Ogden's River. It had then been Unknown River, Mary's River, and Baron River. And twenty years later, it was destined to become one of the greatest routes west for thousands of ox driven covered wagons; and one of the greatest trans-continental routes for all forms of transportation.

*Written by Victor Goodwin - DW:*

~~According to Thompson & West's History of Nevada, 1881,~~ Paradise Valley was first discovered by whites in June, 1863, when a party of four prospectors from Star City, a then bustling mining community in southern Humboldt County, about twenty miles south of present day Winnemucca, came upon it by way of Rebel Creek, on the Quinn River side of the Santa Rosa Range. Upon seeing a wide and beautiful valley stretched to the eastward below where they stood on the Santa Rosa divide, between Rebel Creek on the west and Cottonwood Creek on the east, one of the party, W. B. Huff, involuntarily exclaimed: "What a paradise!" Thus the valley was named. They forthwith gave up all thought of mining, and each took up homestead claims in the valley.

The next month, W. C. Gregg, another member of this same party, returned to the valley with haying equipment, and baled two hundred and fifty tons of wild hay, which he sold at Star City and Austin. This was the first agricultural use of the valley.

The following year, 1864, a large party of settlers came in and established homesteads. The first grain was planted that spring; small patches of vegetables were also cultivated. From the forty-five acres of wheat, 1,000 bushels were harvested, well over 20 bushels to the acre, which the settlers sold to the mining camps at Star City, Unionville, and Austin for approximately \$9,000.00. According to Mrs. Adell Jones' article about Paradise Valley in issue number two of Nevada Highways and Parks for 1956, these early crops were all raised by irrigation, as the valley was abundantly watered by the snow-fed streams flowing into it from the Santa Rosa Range to the north and west.

Serious trouble with the Piutes, starting in 1865 and continuing through 1869, greatly hampered further settlement and agricultural and irrigational development in the valley. Fort Winfield Scott was established in 1866 in the north end of the valley. The officer's quarters and barracks of the old fort are now used as a dwelling and barns by the Buckingham family in Paradise Valley. The old fort was finally abandoned in 1871, the troops there being moved to Fort McDermitt, north of Paradise Valley.

From 1870 onward, after the final quelling of the Indians, the settlement and improvement of the valley went ahead rapidly. To process the increasingly heavy crops of wheat and barley being grown there, the first flour mill was established by C. A. Adams on Martin Creek, near where it enters the north end of the valley, in 1868, according to Thompson & West. The mill, powered by turbines turned by the waters of Martin Creek, was under the ownership of Samuel Pierce in 1880. It was known as the Silver State Flour Mill, and was described as having two runs of burr stones. It turned out an excellent grade of flour; heavy freight wagons pulled by ten to twelve and even fourteen horse teams hauled the flour over the old road up Indian Creek, across Hinkey Summit, and up Quinn River clear into Oregon. Its products were sold everywhere within a hundred miles' radius of the valley.

In the early 1880's, it became the property of Battiste Reconzone, and remained for many years under his family's management. In 1907, at the St. Louis World's Fair, several gold medals were awarded to this mill for its products of white and graham flour and breakfast cereals, according to Mrs. Jones' article. After over ninety years, the mill is still standing, and is in perfect running condition.

Because of the wonderful Idaho fescue and bluebunch wheatgrass ranges on the Santa Rosa's and in Martin Basin, to the north of the valley, livestock raising soon became as important as agriculture. As early as 1880, the census of that year showed 7,000 cattle, 10,500 sheep, and 1,000 horses in the valley.

Paradise City, now known as Paradise Valley, was located in 1866 by C. A. Nichols and his family. After him came Charles Kemler, who was destined to become one of the Valley's most important citizens. He erected the first store in the town, and the first hotel, a two-story house which still stands in Paradise, across from the Post Office. At

about the same time, he erected a recreation hall, which had a dance floor mounted on springs and roller bearings, according to Mrs. Jones, which was indeed a rarity for Nevada in those days. It disappeared, along with Kemler's store and Albert Pasquale's store and famous Auditorium Hotel, in the many disastrous fires which have erupted periodically in the town.

Mr. Kemler also erected a flour mill on the east side of the valley, in the vicinity of the Little Humboldt, in 1873. It was the first such mill in Nevada to be powered by steam. This made a total of two flour mills which have operated at one time or another in the valley.

By 1881, Paradise City had over 100 inhabitants, according to Thompson & West. There were three hotels, two public halls, three stores for general merchandise, one drug store, one brewery, four saloons, one carpenter and cabinet shop, two blacksmith shops, one physician, a barber, a harness maker, a butcher, and one school, which, incidentally, was on the second floor of Mr. Kemler's aforementioned hotel.

Other settlements in the valley in 1880 were at Spring City and Queen City. Queen City started out as a rival to Paradise City, but is now little more than a fragrant memory, as is likewise the case with Spring City. Queen City was five miles northeast of Paradise, in the canyon of Martin Creek. It consisted of a cluster of buildings near the Paradise Quartz Mill, which was erected in 1874. A few years later, the mill closed down and most of the population left. In 1879, while the mill was still running, the town contained 100 inhabitants, but Thompson & West state that it did not long prove a rival to Paradise City, being situated in a cramped and rather inaccessible area in the canyon. By 1881, the mill having shut down, the settlement was down to eighteen inhabitants. The mill was described as having ten stamps, and was operated both by steam and water power. It had an ore-roasting furnace, also.

Spring City, at the mouth of the present Spring City Creek, twelve miles northeast of Paradise City and six miles from Queen City, had a population of approximately 200 in 1880, with its own post office, two stores, seven saloons, two hotels, one restaurant, one brewery, one bookstore, and various other places of business, according to Thompson & West.

The History and Resources of the Paradise Valley Ranger District as compiled by Gerald Horton in 1957:

The old Santa Rosa National Forest was created by Act of Congress on April 1, 1911.

In the early days good grazing existed all over the mountains. The range was used principally by the local residents who owned improved ranch property. Under this use the range remained productive and yielded a good forage crop each year.

From 1906 to 1911 there was a great influx of sheep into the Santa Rosa mountains. It was a free-for-all to see who could get the most and the local ranchers, who owned lands, were crowded back almost to their fences.

The result was inevitable. The grass was grazed exceedingly close and a large part of the vegetative cover was destroyed. Watersheds were impaired and the flow of streams upon which ranch property depended was jeopardized.

To protect their means of livelihood, the local ranchers petitioned for the setting aside of the Santa Rosa's as a National Forest. This was done and the act was signed by the President on April 1, 1911.

The first supervisor of the Santa Rosa National Forest was W. W. Blakeslee, and the headquarters were at Paradise Valley. The Forest was divided into three districts.

District 3 was at the north end and included the area north from Threemile, Buckskin Mountain and the North Fork of the Little Humboldt to the Oregon State Line. The ranger on this district was Frank Border. He had a temporary station on Eightmile Creek east of the UC Ranch where the clump of large cottonwoods now stands. His station consisted of two tents and a corral. Frank was married, had a family and occupied this tent camp year long.

District 2 consisted of the west slope of the Santa Rosa Mountains south from Threemile almost to Paradise Hill. The ranger station for this district was located at Rebel Creek. This station included a house, cellar, corral and horse pasture. It was located near the clump of cottonwoods at the mouth of Rebel Creek. Nothing remained here except the horse pasture, which is used by the Forest Service and by the Granite Peak allotment permittees on their spring cattle drive around the mountains.

There were different rangers stationed here at different times. Probably the best known was a Ranger Miller who came from the Gold Creek country of northern Elko County.

District three consisted of Martin Basin and the Paradise Valley side of the mountain. Operations on this district were directed from the supervisor's office at Paradise and from the Lamance station. Paul Travis was the ranger and he lived on his homestead at Lamance.

This was the set up in the first years of the forest. It remained this way while the first jobs of posting the boundary, mapping, establishing permits, etc. were done. After a short while when the most pressing of the early organizational work was accomplished, the Santa Rosa National Forest was designated a Ranger District and attached to the Humboldt National Forest at Elko. Paul Travis was left as district ranger and remained until his retirement in 1942.

With the coming of roads and the pickup truck, most of the old "ranger pastures" and other facilities have been removed. A few are left and are maintained to hold saddle and pack horses used on administrative and range improvement work. The old Calico Ranger Station Cabin may still be seen on the flat between the Forks Ranch and Calico Mountain.

In later years rangers Justice, McKenzie, Cloward, and Horton have been stationed here and the district has been designated as the Paradise Valley Ranger District. During this

time, for reasons of economy in administration, the district was transferred to the Toiyabe National Forest and then back to the Humboldt.

When the national forest system was set up 50 years ago, the guiding principle laid down was to administer them for . . . “the most productive use for the permanent good of the whole people . . .” and “where conflicting interests must be reconciled, the question will always be decided from the standpoint of the greatest good of the greatest numbers in the long run.” It is the guiding principle under which the Santa Rosa’s have been, are being and will be managed. This is the multiple use policy which means, briefly, that every member of the public, who really own the public lands, shall have the opportunity to use them.

The natural resources of the Santa Rosa’s contribute much to the economy of Humboldt County. Generally, they are watershed, grazing, recreation and wildlife.

To divide up the use of the land among such different groups of users is not easily done. The Forest Service is often faced with demands from individuals or a special interest group to favor it to the disadvantage of others. The Forest Ranger is always caught in the middle and is sometimes reminded of one of Teddy Roosevelt’s stories.

It seems that one day the President remarked to Quanah Parker, one of the last great Comanche Chiefs, that since the chief was rapidly converting to the ways of the white man that he should go all of the way and have only one wife instead of the eight that he then had. The old chief silently thought this over for a long while and then remarked, “Okay, but you tell ‘em which one I am going to keep.”

Happily, the uses of the major resources of the Paradise Valley Ranger district are quite compatible. The grazing use should be so managed that there will be enough of the desirable grasses left for the range to revegetate itself, add organic matter to the soil to enrich it and make it more productive, and to protect the soil from erosion. This is in the best interests of the grazing resource and is also good watershed management. It leaves forage for wildlife and assures optimum year-long stream flow for good fishing conditions. It creates favorable aesthetic conditions for camping, picnicking and just generally enjoying the scenery and the peace and quiet of the open.

The Forest Service, the grazing permittees and the other forest users have done a lot with the Santa Rosa’s in the past; there is a lot more to be done in the future. More range improvements are needed and ranges can be improved. More campgrounds and recreation facilities are needed to meet the growing recreation and wildlife use demands. We could safely harvest probably 800 deer a year, which would mean a lot of money to the state in license fees each year. If each hunter spent \$50 on guns, ammunition, gas & oil, boots, coats, tents, etc., it would mean \$40,000 a year thrown into the economy of the country. A winter sports area in one or more of the high basins could mean 100 or 150 winter sports enthusiasts weekending in Winnemucca; and how much would that add to the loose change floating around.

We could go on and on, but this is some idea of what has happened to Humboldt County's publicly owned National Forest Land in the past and some idea as to what could happen in the future.

Ranger Gene Hoffman was assigned to the Paradise Valley District in 1957 and has managed its many resources since that time.

The Santa Rosa National Forest was created on April 1, 1911, by President Wm. H. Taft. On July 1, 1917, the Forest was transferred to the Humboldt and the Santa Rosa National Forest name was discontinued. In 1938, May 9, the Santa Rosa Division, formally the Santa Rosa National Forest, was transferred to the Toiyabe National Forest. Again in 1951, the Santa Rosa Division was transferred back to the Humboldt National Forest where it has remained until the present.